

# REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICERS

OF

THE LUNATIC ASYLUM

FOR THE

County of Lancaster.

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INSTITUTED 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 1816.

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TO THE

VISITING JUSTICES

OF THE

LANCASTER COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM.

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DURING the past year 205 patients have been admitted into this Institution. The daily average number has been 767. The recoveries have been 63, or  $8\frac{1}{4}$  per cent., and the deaths 91, or  $11\frac{3}{4}$  per cent.

A reference to the table of mortality will show that there has been no extraordinary visitation of sickness during the past year. Diarrhœa has occasionally prevailed, but in no respect varying from its usual characteristics: indeed, under ordinary circumstances, it might have passed without remark, but with Asiatic cholera prevailing in different parts of the kingdom, it may be well to state that even the slightest derangement of the bowels is looked upon with suspicion, and is immediately placed under treatment. Every precaution is taken to avert the approach of this devastating disease. The diet, clothing, and habits of the patients are scrupulously attended to, and the general principles of Hygiene are carefully enforced.

There is still much cause to complain of the enfeebled condition of many of the patients when brought into the Institution. It is not an uncommon occurrence to receive patients whose cases are entirely hopeless as regards recovery, and who are bed-ridden from the time of their admission. It is inconsistent with the interests of humanity to have them removed to a distant hospital when in such an advanced state of disease; but it is confidently hoped when the Asylums at Prestwich and Rainhill are opened, that admissions of this kind will not occur, as it is believed that from the present want of accommodation throughout the County, many persons of unsound mind, and fit patients for an asylum, are necessarily detained in workhouses.

The new offices have been occupied for some months past. They are found to be very commodious, and with some alterations, in the course of adoption, it is hoped that these departments will answer all the purposes for which they were designed. Steam supplied from a



large boiler is extensively used for cooking, washing, and drying clothes; steam pipes have been introduced into several of the corridors and dormitories, which have added much to the comfort of the patients during the winter months: and by the same means warm water in the different bath rooms can at any time readily be supplied. The removal of the old kitchen has materially enlarged one of the yards on the east or women's side of the building; additional light and air have thus been admitted into the large dormitory below, as well as into the gallery or passage in the basement story to the front, and the alteration in a sanitary point of view is altogether most satisfactory. The old laundry is at present used as a dormitory for twenty patients, who are daily assisting in the wash-house or laundry.

It is with deep regret that the Medical Officers have again to advert to the great deficiency of water during the last three months. The laudable exertions made by the Visitors a few years back to avert such a calamity, by forming a large reservoir within the grounds, calculated to hold one million and a half gallons of water, and obtaining its supply by pipes from a spring on the heights above Stanley Farm, have, during the late dry season, entirely failed. It is estimated that 18,000 gallons of water are daily required for the purposes of the Institution, and yet for two months back certainly not one third of this quantity has been obtained from every available source. The wells in the immediate vicinity have all been put in requisition, and still it has been found absolutely necessary to exercise an injurious economy. It is not easy to conceive the difficulties which have to be contended with under such untoward circumstances, more especially in a crowded hospital, where personal and general cleanliness are of the first importance. Every means that could be devised to meet such an exigency have been promptly applied; and although the necessity for unremitting care and watchfulness still exists, yet it is consolatory to add that there has been no sickness in the establishment which can be fairly attributable to this state of things.

Occupation of some kind is provided for all patients capable of undertaking it. Out-door labour, as being the most beneficial, is encouraged as much as possible; and many who had been unaccustomed to this kind of work cheerfully render assistance. A large amount of earth has been removed from the north front of the building, the advantages of which have already become apparent, and in addition much of the land is kept in a state of profitable cultivation. The workshops continue in full operation—the joiner, painter, and blacksmith, receive considerable assistance from the patients; and weaving, shoemaking, and other occupations are extensively engaged in—indeed all the shoes for the establishment are made by them, with the assistance of two paid workmen. The tabular returns will show that the women are not behind hand in industry, and that besides the large quantity of clothing made by them, they are extensively occupied in the laundry, kitchen, and galleries. It is no part however of the system of management merely to obtain work from the hands of the patients; all is done with a view to

promote their restoration to society; and whilst occupation forms an important ingredient in this view, care is taken to afford ample time for relaxation and amusement. This admixture of work and play, so to speak, appears to be fully appreciated by the patients, and the alacrity and cheerfulness with which they resume their work is by many of them only equalled by the zest with which they partake of the amusements provided for them.

The Medical Officers watch with anxiety the experiment now making in Ireland as regards a separate establishment for the reception of criminal lunatics; and they are the more anxious to hear of its success owing to the inconvenience and annoyance experienced in this Institution from the admission of this class of patients—now twenty-seven in number, eight being cases of murder. The injustice of compelling those afflicted with insanity to associate with criminals, is sufficiently apparent; but the evils consequent on such association can only be fully appreciated by those having the direction and management of asylums. The one is constantly taunting the other with the enormities of his crimes, whilst he in his turn is retaliated on in offensive and irritating language: consequently, dissensions and quarrels are apt to arise, and the most judicious discipline is frustrated. Moreover there is a laudable reluctance on the part of the State to set criminals at liberty, even when their sanity is certified; and hence parties are retained in confinement under circumstances provokingly painful to themselves, and well calculated to develope all the evil dispositions of former profligacy; plots and intrigues of various kinds result, and mischief to the general well-being of the Asylum necessarily arises. The vigilance and superintendence required to counteract such a state of things materially increase the expenses of the Institution and the burdens of the County.

The vagrants—a great portion of whom are Irish—at present amount to one hundred and sixteen. This forms a heavy charge on the County; and it is a matter of regret that, even where the settlement of any of these parties is ascertained, they can neither be sent home, nor can their respective parishes be charged with the expenses of their maintenance.

The Commissioners in Lunacy paid their annual visit in August last, and left the following report.

“Lancaster County Asylum, August 29th, 1848.

“We, the undersigned Commissioners in Lunacy, have this day officially visited the Lancaster County Lunatic Asylum. We have seen all the patients, and have inspected all the wards appropriated to their use.

“There are at present 751 patients altogether in the Asylum, of whom 401 are males, and 350 are females; one only of these was in seclusion, and no one was subjected to mechanical restraint, which in fact is never resorted to. We found the patients in a tranquil state, well clothed, and in every respect comfortably accommodated. Fires were in several of the rooms where such patients as were sick, or not in strong bodily health, were placed. The rooms themselves (both



day rooms and sleeping rooms) as well as the galleries, were clean, well ventilated, and in excellent order. We did not perceive a single room, whatever might be the class of patients resident in it, in which there was any offensive smell; and we had occasion repeatedly to remark the scrupulous cleanliness that prevailed throughout the whole of the establishment.

"Since the last visit of the Commissioners, on the 13th of September last, there have 224 patients been admitted into the Asylum, of whom 71 were in bad or feeble health at the time of admission. During the same period there appear to have been 112 discharges and 60 deaths, 14 of these being caused by diseased brain, 3 by epilepsy, 14 by consumption, and 8 being preceded by general paralysis.

"We are glad to observe that considerable progress has been made towards providing suitable offices for this large Institution. A bakehouse and a brewhouse have been completed, and are now in use; and a lofty and extensive kitchen, with various adjoining conveniences, for the preparation and distribution of food; and a laundry and a washhouse, each of spacious dimensions, with various other offices, are in a very forward state.

"On going through the Establishment, we observed, with pleasure, that the conduct of the attendants towards the patients was marked by gentleness and patience. Much praise is due to the matron for the condition of the female wards; and the state of the whole Establishment reflects the highest credit on the attention, skill, and judgment of Mr. Gaskell.

"There is nothing new to report on the subject of amusements, employment, or religious services; and the dietary remains the same as heretofore, except that during the winter season an additional quantity of animal food is given to the patients.

(Signed,)

"B. W. PROCTER.

"T. TURNER."

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that all the officers of the Institution are animated with a desire to promote in every way the best interests of the establishment, and that a cheerfulness and alacrity is observable throughout, indicating a determination not to be thwarted by difficulties in a faithful discharge of onerous duties.

EDWD. D. DE VITRÉ, M. D.  
JOHN BROADHURST,

*Surgeon and Superintendent.*

*County Lunatic Asylum,  
July, 1849.*

# DURATION OF TREATMENT OF PATIENTS DISCHARGED CURED.

Under 3 months .....	14
„ 6 „ .....	23
„ 9 „ .....	15
„ 12 „ .....	7
„ 18 „ .....	3
„ 11 years .....	1
Total..	63

## CAUSES OF DEATH,

*From June, 1848, to June, 1849.*

	Males.	Females.
Disease of Brain .....	13	3
Do. with General Paralysis .....	15	3
Epilepsy .....	7	..
General Debility .....	2	6
Consumption .....	9	11
Diseased Spine .....	..	1
Chronic Bronchitis .....	1	..
Diarrhoea .....	2	1
Ulceration of Intestines .....	1	..
Scrofulous Disease of Arm .....	1	..
Ascites .....	..	1
Anasarca .....	..	1
Suicide .....	1	..
Valvular Disease of Heart .....	1	1
Gangrene of Lung .....	1	..
Erysipelas of Scalp .....	1	..
Chronic Pleurisy .....	..	1
Gastro Enterite .....	..	1
Disease of Epiglottis .....	1	..
Hydro Thorax .....	1	..
Empyema .....	1	..
Apoplexy .....	1	..
Exhaustion after continued excitement .....	1	1
	60	31

EXTRACT FROM THE DAILY ACCOUNT OF THE  
STATE OF THE PATIENTS—MEN.

JUNE, 1849.

EMPLOYED.	Thursday. 22nd.		Friday. 23rd.		Saturday. 24th.	
	Morn.	Aft.	Morn.	Aft.	Morn.	Aft.
Working in the Garden .....	5	5	5	5	5	5
—————Land .....	58	90	59	91	59	58
—————Airing Courts	2		2	2	2	4
Pumping .....	12	12	12	12	12	12
Assisting Joiners .....	2	2	2	2	2	2
—————Plumbers .....	3	3	3	3	2	2
—————Shoe Makers .....	8	8	8	8	8	8
—————Tailors .....	7	7	6	6	6	6
—————in the Kitchen .....	8	7	8	7	8	7
—————Baker and Brewer..	4	3	4	4	4	4
Cleaning Galleries.....	115	71	109	65	111	80
Plaiting Straw .....	18	21	19	18	18	19
Making Mats .....	5	4	4	4	5	5
Picking Flocks .....	30	22	23	25	28	30
Other in-door Work .....	45	44	48	46	42	51
Breaking Sand .....	5	8	3	2	2	3
Weaving .....	3	3	3	3	3	3
Total Employed.....	330	310	318	303	317	299
UNEMPLOYED.						
Excitement with Restraint ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
—————without Restraint.	2	2	2	2	2	2
—————with Seclusion.....	1	2	1	1	1	2
Sick .....	9	9	9	9	9	9
Quiet .....	62	81	74	89	85	92
Total Unemployed.....	74	94	86	101	97	105
Admissions.....	1		..	..	..	..
Discharges and Deaths .....	1		..	..	..	..
Total.....	404		404		404	



EXTRACT FROM THE DAILY ACCOUNT OF THE  
STATE OF THE PATIENTS—WOMEN.

JUNE, 1849.

EMPLOYED.	Thursday, 22nd.		Friday, 23rd.		Saturday, 24th.	
	Morn.	Aft.	Morn.	Aft.	Morn.	Aft.
Cleaning in the Galleries . . . .	80	60	90	70	90	70
Assisting in the Kitchen . . . .	8	8	8	8	8	8
Peeling Potatoes . . . . .	16	16	16	16	16	16
Washing and Ironing . . . . .	52	52	49	49	49	49
Making Jackets . . . . .	14	14	14	14	16	16
Binding Boots, &c . . . . .	6	6	6	6	6	6
Making Hats and Stocks . . . .	6	6	4	4	4	4
Knitting and Netting . . . . .	30	30	28	28	28	28
Sewing and Quilting . . . . .	80	100	80	100	80	100
Mending Stockings . . . . .	16	16	16	16	24	24
Picking Flocks . . . . .	10	10	12	12	..	..
Working in the Garden . . . . .	8	8	8	8	9	9
Total Employed . . . . .	326	326	331	331	330	330
UNEMPLOYED.						
Excitement with Restraint ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
— with Seclusion ..	2	2	1	1	1	1
— without Seclusion ..	4	4	4	4	4	4
Sick . . . . .	16	16	16	16	16	16
Quiet . . . . .	39	39	36	36	37	37
Total Unemployed . . . . .	61	61	57	57	58	58
Admissions . . . . .	1		..	..	..	..
Discharges and Deaths . . . . .	..		..	..	..	..
Total . . . . .	388		388		388	

# AN ACCOUNT OF CLOTHING MADE BY THE WOMEN PATIENTS.

*From June, 1848, to June, 1849.*

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Shirts .....	731	Trowsers .....	229
Shifts .....	765	Quilted Rugs .....	299
Flannels .....	1033	Quilted Night Dresses ....	8
Petticoats .....	1128	Quilted Trowsers .....	21
Gowns .....	32	Knitted Stockings .....	262
Bed Gowns .....	498	Knitted Boots .....	12
Caps .....	1200	Knitted Bandages .....	20
Aprons .....	888	Knitted Gloves .....	12
Handkerchiefs .....	825	Netted Caps .....	42
Stays .....	283	Netted Borders .....	43
Vests for Women .....	189	Pairs Cloth Boot Tops ....	288
Bonnets .....	71	Pairs Leather Shoes bound.	366
Straw Hats .....	24	Dusters .....	400
Drawers .....	152	Shrouds .....	63
Stocks .....	472	Table Cloths .....	46
Bed Ticks .....	696	Window Blinds .....	42
Pillow Ticks .....	164	Matrasses .....	20
Bolster Cases .....	55	Counterpanes hemmed ....	60
Pillow Cases .....	473	Shawls .....	27
Sheets .....	1520	Curtains .....	2
Towels .....	197	Door Mats .....	43
Jackets .....	91	Hearth Rugs .....	6
Waistcoats .....	113		

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